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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SY-05 USSS-00 MCT-01 DHA-02
CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01
PRS-01 PA-01 USIE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15
NSC-05 ARAE-00 L-03 /089 W
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9089
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, AR
SUBJECT: LOCAL POWER UNION LEADER DISAPPEARS

REF: BUENOS AIRES 1166

1. OSCAR SMITH, FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL LOCAL OF THE LUZ Y FUERZA UNION, DISAPPEARED LAST FRIDAY MORNING AFTER LEAVING HIS HOUSE ON HIS WAY TO A UNION INSTALLATION. AS WE REPORTED REFTEL, SMITH WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN REACHING AN UNDERSTANDING WITH LABOR MINISTER LIENDO WHICH LED TO THE SUSPENSION OF THE RECENT CONFLICT IN THE LIGHT AND POWER INDUSTRY. ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT, SMITH'S CAR WAS BLOCKED OFF AT AN INTERSECTION BY ARMED MEN IN THREE OTHER VEHICLES WHO THEN WHISKED HIM AND HIS AUTO AWAY. COINCIDENTALLY, THERE WAS A RASH OF BOMBINGS IN LIGHT AND POWER UNION INSTALLATIONS OVER THE WEEKEND.

2. THREE ALTERNATE POSSIBILITIES ARE BEING DISCUSSED AS EXPLAINING HIS DISAPPEARANCE (A) HE WAS KIDNAPPED BY LEFTIST TERRORISTS IN RETALIATION FOR HIS ALLEGED BETRAYAL OF THE

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WORKERS BY REACHING A COMPROMISE SOLUTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT;

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Djiellie DATE 11/20/82
RDS☐ or XDS☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
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(B) HE WAS KIDNAPPED BY A PARAMILITARY OR PARAPOLICE GROUP ACTING UNDER THE INSTRUCTIONS OF HARDLINING ELEMENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES IN ORDER TO COERCE AND/OR INTERROGATE SMITH, PERHAPS INCLUDING ABOUT HIS LINKS WITH THE LABOR MINISTER; OR (C) HE "PULLED A POWDER" IN LIGHT OF SOME RANK AND FILE DISCONTENT WITH THE DECISION TO GO BACK TO WORK. SOME ALBEIT VEILED COMMENTARY IN THE WEEKEND'S PRESS SEEMS TO SUGGEST THAT THE SECOND THEORY IS THE PREVAILING ONE AT THE MOMENT.

3. LIGHT AND POWER UNION LEADERS HAVE SENT MESSAGES TO LEADING GOVERNMENT FIGURES PROTESTING SMITH'S DISAPPEARANCE AND DEMANDING AN IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION. THEY HAVE ALSO, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, SENT MESSAGES TO THE ILO, THE ICFTU AND TO THE AFL-CIO ASKING FOR EXPRESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY.

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE MILITARY INTERVENTOR OF THE BUENOS AIRES UNION LOCAL (AN ARMY COLONEL) AUTHORIZED THE LIGHT AND POWER WORKERS TO WALK OFF THEIR JOBS EARLY THIS PAST SATURDAY IN PROTEST AGAINST THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SMITH.
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